Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20510

February 10, 2022

Dear Secretary Blinken and Secretary Yellen,

I am writing concerning the sanctions programs currently in place in Somalia pursuant to Executive Order 13536 of April 12, 2010 and Executive Order 13620 of July 20, 2012. As you know, I have a strong interest in our policy toward Somalia, and I am eager to understand the sanctions policy as part of the larger strategy toward Somalia.

The situation in Somalia has changed dramatically since these orders were issued during the Obama Administration, and the Executive Orders don't enumerate any specific conditions under which sanctions can be lifted. I know we share the goal of making our sanctions programs more flexible and responsive to changing realities, as well as the goal of incorporating sanctions into broader strategies in Somalia and elsewhere.

With that in mind, I request a prompt response to the following questions:

1) What criteria, if any, do the State and Treasury Departments have for lifting sanctions on individuals or entities pursuant to the above-named Executive Orders?
2) Since all of the sanctions issued under the above-named Executive Orders were issued in 2010 and 2012, how often have State and Treasury reassessed the need for the sanctions both individually and collectively?
3) How does an assessment of these sanctions factor into the State Department's overall review of its Somalia strategy?
4) How do these sanctions authorities factor into the Administration's Somalia strategy more broadly?
5) What is your assessment of the impact of these sanctions from 2010-present on:
   a. The security situation in Somalia?
   b. The humanitarian situation in Somalia?
   c. The political stability of Somalia?
   d. The stated reasons for the sanctions in the Executive Orders, including combating Al Shabaab financing, combating piracy, and combating violence against civilians?

I appreciate your prompt attention this matter.

Sincerely,

Ilhan Omar
Member of Congress